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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 AMMAN 002233

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/13/2013

TAGS: [AEMR](#) [AMGT](#) [PREL](#) [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [CVIS](#) [EFIN](#) [ETRD](#) [IZ](#) [JO](#)

SUBJECT: TFI201: AMMAN SITREP 35 (4/13 1745 LOCAL)

Classified By: DCM Gregory L. Berry for reasons 1.5 (B)(D).

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General Overview  
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1. (C) Amman was calm throughout the weekend. We did not hear reports of significant demonstrations or protests anywhere in the country.

2. (SBU) The Embassy opened April 13 for normal business. Activities at the American Language Center and the Peace Corps offices remain suspended. Movements of American personnel remain restricted. The investigation continues into the April 8 shooting incident involving an Embassy TDYer.

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Consular Issues  
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3. (C) One purported Amcit currently is being held at no-man's land at the Trebil border crossing after he was refused entry by Jordanian authorities. The Amcit told UNHCR and GOJ authorities that he would voluntarily return to Iraq but wanted to wait until other members of his traveling party arrived at the border. He refused to show his passport to UNHCR officials. This purported Amcit is traveling with a large group of Iranians suspected by the GOJ of being members of Mujahidin-e-Khalq (MEK). We presume that the purported Amcit is of Iranian origin as well. Conoff will attempt to get identity of Amcit from GOJ authorities. If successful, we will provide the identity immediately to the task force.

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GOJ Actions/Statements  
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4. (U) Local press gave prominent coverage April 13 to King Abdullah's and Queen Rania's April 12 blood donation for Iraqi war casualties. The official Petra News Service stated "Their Majesties donated their blood for the Iraqi wounded to consecrate their support for the Iraqi people and reflect the bonds of blood and brotherly ties between Jordan and Iraq."

5. (U) The Petra News Service also quoted Jordan Armed Forces (JAF) General Mohammad Majed al-Eitan, Director of the national Crisis Management Center, as saying that Jordan would set up a field hospital in Iraq as early as next week to provide medical services: "Consultations are currently underway with members of the Iraqi Embassy in Amman and coalition forces in Baghdad to send the field hospital that will be able to carry out general surgery as well as provide emergency medical services."

6. (U) Minister of Information Mohammad al-Adwan called April 12 for coalition forces in Iraq to put an end to civil unrest in Iraq. Al-Adwan stated "We express our concern over the anarchy, looting and vandalism under way in Baghdad and other regions of Iraq. Maintaining security and stability must be the priority in Iraq, as well as providing immediate assistance to the brethren Iraqi people."

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Security  
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7 (U) No new issues.

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Economic and Trade Developments  
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8. (u) First quarter export figures released by the Irbid Chamber of Industry show a 45% increase over exports from Q1 of 2002. QIZ garment exports continue to represent over 90% of all exports from the Al Hassan Industrial Estate in Irbid, registering 44% growth in Q1 compared to Q1 of last year and topping \$74.5 million for the quarter.

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Refugee/Humanitarian Issues  
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9. (C) On April 12, 96 Iranians arrived at the Jordanian side of the Trebil border crossing, seeking temporary UNHCR protection until they can be returned to the countries in

which they allegedly hold refugee status. The GOJ is currently holding the group in no-man's land at the border but has already told UNHCR that some members of the group, including a purported US citizen (see para 2), would not be allowed to enter. The GOJ reportedly believes that this group is part of the Mujahadin-e-Khalq (MEK), a US-designated foreign terrorist organization. The Iranians told UNHCR that another 28-30 members of their "group" are expected to reach the Jordanian-Iraqi border later today, April 13. UNHCR is digging more latrines and erecting more tents to accommodate this group but will not be able to accommodate more than 150 persons at no-man's land.

10. (C) UNHCR is skeptical of the group's bona fides. The first groups to arrive were all unmarried men in their early 40s, followed by a group of single women also in their early 40s. They claim not to know each other but quickly organized themselves to tidy up the tents and assign sleeping quarters. UNHCR reports that the group in general seems to be very uncomfortable dealing with UNHCR officials. All 96 Iranians who arrived April 12 are carrying European or North American travel documents, many of which are UNHCR convention travel documents issued in the late 1980s or early 1990s and presumably expired. Some are carrying what appear to be fraudulent French cartes de sejour. The Iranians claim that they returned to Iraq just a few weeks ago for the Nowruz holiday but their travel documents indicate they have been out of their respective countries of asylum for much longer. UNHCR is compiling a list of the Iranians and their alleged travel documents and will approach each relevant embassy in Amman to verify their bona fides. UNHCR also will demarche Jordanian authorities to allow these Iranian entry and most likely will raise this case (but not the possible MEK connection) at the UN's April 13 press briefing. Jordanian authorities are unlikely to agree to this request.

11. (C) UNHCR also reports that a group of 200 former Syrian Ba'ath party and Syrian Muslim Brotherhood officials, all long-term residents of Iraq who were granted asylum by Saddam's regime, are headed to the Jordanian border at Trebil. The group reportedly was denied entry by the Syrian government.

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Press  
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12. (U) Situation in Iraq: Jordanian dailies varied in their coverage of the situation in Iraq. While Al-Rai reported a drop in looting and that 1200 American policemen would arrive in Iraq soon, Al-Dustour highlighted the battles around one of the presidential palaces and the two "martyrdom" (suicide) attacks against U.S. forces. Al-Rai called them "commando operations."

13. (U) Looting: Jordanian dailies all held the U.S. responsible for the looting. Al-Rai interviewed Iraqis in Jordan who said that the U.S. forces protected the oil wells and oil ministry, but not Iraqi citizens and property.

14. (U) Editorial Commentary: Bater Wardam in Al-Dustour says that the American "occupation army" is instigating and helping with the looting because they want to give "legitimacy" to their presence in Iraq, and to say that they are the only ones capable of bringing order to Iraq. Wardam concludes his article by hoping that the Iraqis will wake up and will not allow the Americans to "steal" Iraq. Urayb Rintawi in Al-Dustour defends the Iraqi people's actions after the fall of the Iraqi regime and strongly criticizes all those who blamed the Iraqi people for not fighting. He says that an "oppressed, deprived and degraded people cannot make a fighting nation."

GNEHM